

## **Historic, Archive Document**

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*Interesting Facts Regarding*

*Avoneverbear*  
*Orange Trees*



*The variety that will revolutionize the orange industry and bring millions of dollars in the State at seasons when there is practically no money coming into Florida. The most prolific and heaviest bearer known to man. A money maker without parallel.*

*For Further Information Address*

**Everbear Nurseries Company**

*Lakeland, Florida*

**REFERENCES:**

Exchange National Bank.....	Tampa, Florida
State Bank of Lakeland.....	Lakeland, Florida
Polk County Trust Company.....	Lakeland, Florida
Polk County National Bank.....	Bartow, Florida
Snell National Bank.....	Winter Haven, Florida
First National Bank.....	Brooksville, Florida

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THIS wonder tree has been continuously blooming and setting fruit almost every month for the past eight years, according to the sworn statement of R. W. Swearingen, the man owning it for seven years prior to December, 1920, makes it beyond all question of doubt the most remarkable discovery in the history of the orange industry. The tree did not attract any attention, however, and was taken as a matter of fact by the owner and his neighbors, until Mr. R. I. Harris, of Avon Park, who had been watching its performance for a year, realized the importance of its immense value to the citrus industry.

When Mr. Harris made known the existence of this wonderful tree, a \$500,000.00 company was formed like magic, by the most substantial business men of southern Florida, to propagate and raise nursery stock in order that the citrus industry should benefit at the earliest possible date. When the news regarding this tree was released to the press, there were comments of every nature, scores of people also claiming to have everbearing orange trees. After all of these statements were thoroughly investigated, it was found that Mr. C. B. Pelton, of Lake Helen, Florida, really had a variety of everbearing orange which showed fine flavor, very thin skin, and exceedingly small size. His letter to the Times Union states that more than 75% of his fruit would pack more than 250 to the box, and while he considered it a very valuable fruit for the home garden, he would not recommend it for large plantings. It has been established beyond all question of doubt that the wonder tree at Avon Park belongs to the same strain as Mr. Pelton's Long's Everbearing, but through more than 30 years of interbudding the improvement has been so great that the only positive identity left is the foliage.

Mr. Pelton saw so much in the press regarding this wonder tree at Avon Park, and in addition was continuously receiving numerous inquiries from Washington regarding his Long's Everbearing which he had introduced 36 years ago, that his curiosity became so much aroused that he paid a visit to the wonder tree at Avon Park, and his letter to the Times Union and to the Crop Physiologist at Washington, copy of which was printed in the Florida Grower of July 23rd, are here reproduced:

Editor Times-Union: In a recent issue of your paper I read an article wherein it said "An everbearing orange tree had been discovered in a grove at Avon Park, which was likely to fulfill the wants of the orange growers," and in your issue of May 31 you printed an article taken from the Tampa Times which says, "Fort Myers orange growers of many years' experience scout the theory that an

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everbearing orange tree had been discovered, and that it is far more likely to be one of the Valencia variety."

### **Says There is Such a Thing**

I wish to state that there is such a thing as an ever-bearing orange tree, although not of recent discovery. Thirty-six years ago I came to Volusia County. I started a large nursery in Lake Helen, which was known as the South Florida Nursery. The same year in August I stopped at an old plantation owned by Redding Long and among a clump of seedling orange trees, twenty-five or thirty years old, was one tree that had five or six hundred ripe oranges on it, also several hundred of different sizes, varying from the size of a hickory nut to fruit almost fully grown, but not showing any color.

I asked Mr. Long if this tree produced a crop like this every year and he replied, "Yes, ever since it began to bear." I bought two dozen of the ripe oranges with a view of testing their keeping quality. I put them in a bureau drawer, unwrapped, for six weeks. They shrunk up and the rind became almost as tough as leather and not one decayed. Believing this would be quite an addition to my orange business, I budded several hundred in my nursery.

I don't recall the year, but it was soon after Grover Cleveland was elected President that I took several of these trees to the Orlando fair (I remember meeting Mr. Cleveland at the fair). I took several orders for the trees, and distributed them in several parts of the state, and no doubt this tree at Avon Park sprung from some of these trees I had sold.

### **Are Many in Lake Helen**

A few years later I went out of the nursery business and the sale of this variety, as far as I know, was never pushed, but there are twenty-five or thirty bearing trees of this variety in Lake Helen today. I have ten or twelve trees in my own grove. The others belong to my neighbors that I planted for them.

They bear the same as a lemon tree, every new growth blooms. The first few years of its bearing we get four growths a year, which gives four different sizes of fruit. After the tree gets quite old and bears heavy crops it is impossible to get more than three growths a year.

Everybody ought to have a few of these trees for home use. The quality and flavor is very fine, the rind is very thin and it has only two or three small seeds. I would not advise planting a large acreage for market, as more than 75 per cent of the total crop will run 250 and smaller to the box.

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The fruit is almost as oblong as an egg. On young trees the fruit will run larger.

I introduced this variety in my catalogue as "Long's Everbearing." As far as I know, the Valencia orange was not known in Florida thirty-six years ago, and this tree of Mr. Long's had been bearing for fifteen years then.

Yours truly,

CHARLES B. PELTON.

Lake Helen, Fla.

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Lake Helen, Fla., July 11, 1921.

Mr. T. R. Robinson,,  
Crop Physiologist,  
U. S. Department of Agriculture,  
Bureau of Plant Industry,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Robinson:—Since receiving your kind favor of the 30th ult., and a photostat copy of the article, "That Everbearing Orange Tree," in the Florida Grower of June 25th, beg to say that my curiosity has been so much aroused concerning the seemingly flattering statements made in said article, that after due consideration I deemed it my duty as the first propagator of the Everbearing orange to pay a visit to Avon Park and see this supposedly wonderful tree.

I arrived at Avon Park at 1:00 p. m. on Saturday, July 9th, and through the courtesy of Mr. R. I. Harris, the man in charge of the tree, I had the pleasure of inspecting it very carefully, and my findings are as follows:

The orange, as compared with my original Long's Everbearing, could not be a greater variance. I find this Avon Park orange to be almost identical with the Valencia as to size, thickness of skin, and color. The peel shows to be thicker and of a more hardy texture than my original Long's Everbearing.

This tree carries at the present time, some 250 or 300 ripe oranges, 75% of which will pack 150 and 176; the larger portion of the remainder equally divided between 126 and 200, with possibly one-half dozen of 96 and 250 each. The tree itself, I consider as prolific, if not the most prolific, of any variety that I have ever observed in my 40 years' experience, and in my judgment, this tree was killed down in the '95 freeze, to within two feet of the ground, and has made its present growth since that time, as it plainly shows that it was budded right at the ground.

By permission of Mr. Harris, I picked with my own hands 14 different sizes of fruit, and observed in addition forms for bloom, which I trust you ap-

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preciate is nothing short of miraculous, and I am free to confess that this is seven sizes more than my largest orange trees have ever carried. This tree has, in my opinion, at least 15 boxes of fruit on it at this time, if it holds them all to maturity, and I saw no sign of any fruit dropping. I examined the ripe fruit on the tree, which showed no sign of drying, which is characteristic of the Everbearing variety.

The most important and mysterious of my findings, and that which makes my heart glad, is the fact that the foliage on this tree is identical with my original Long's Everbearing, with the one exception, that it has been rendered thornless through the efforts of some horticulturist. The improvement that has been made in this orange is nothing short of miraculous, and should revolutionize the orange industry. My pride in it runs so high that I trust that your good offices will spare no efforts in thoroughly investigating as to the merits and worth of this orange, and as to its distinction as to variety.

The improvement in this Avon Park orange, especially with regard to the shape and enlargement in size, overcoming the objections to my original Long's Everbearing, and making it equal in size to any of the known varieties, makes it by far the most desirable orange for large plantings which has ever been discovered in the history of the orange industry, and I would especially recommend it for all plantings in Central and North Central Florida, as the writer has experienced March frosts that have destroyed practically all his Valencia bloom; if the same had been of the Everbearing variety, I would still have had four-fifths of a crop to market that year, and that amount marketed from May to September would have brought more money than a full Valencia crop that had to be marketed by the first of May.

I trust you will not consider it necessary for me to send you any more samples of fruit from my original Long's Everbearing, as there is positively no comparison whatever in this fruit and that which I have inspected at Avon Park.

I am having a photograph made of the fruit which I picked from this Avon Park tree which I shall send you under separate cover, which I consider much more representative of the true condition than the picture shown in the Florida Grower.

Yours very truly,

CHARLES B. PELTON.

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#### **Endorsement of the Everbearing Orange**

Thonotosassa, Fla.—(To the Florida Grower)—  
We have been reading with considerable interest

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the articles you have published in regard to the Everbearing Orange tree discovered at Avon Park, and, notwithstanding the fact that you have solicited the opinions of old citrus growers with regard to this orange, and while we are among the oldest and have considerable confidence in our knowledge and judgment on the citrus industry, we had no intention of writing an opinion in regard to this orange, fully realizing that the orange was able to take care of itself, regardless of any citrus grower's or citrus expert's opinion between the city of Washington and the Everglades of Florida.

We enjoy the distinction of being the first persons to visit this wonder tree after it had been purchased for propagation purposes. When we had advanced to within 30 feet of this tree we were able to distinguish definitely that it was a distinct variety as a result of its foliage, and one that we had never seen before. Upon examination of this tree we found fruit of all sizes, from ripe oranges down to bloom, one of the most prolific trees we ever viewed, and carrying a uniform amount of different sizes; we spoke out openly that this was the grandest discovery in the history of Florida; that it undoubtedly meant that we could, in years to come, ship a steady flow of first class oranges every day in the year. This orange, in our opinion, is the most meritorious orange that has ever been discovered in Florida. If there never was a box shipped after July 1, a person planting a grove to this orange has every assurance that if any of his trees do not bloom in season and set a crop, that all he has to do is to wait until they bud out again, and his trees will load up with fruit and keep loading with each time they produce a growth until his tree has all the fruit that Nature will allow it to have.

As to the qualities of this fruit, there is not a citrus expert on earth, in our honest opinion, who could distinguish these oranges from the genuine Valencias if they were poured in a bin together. We are testing this orange at this time for its keeping qualities, and from our observation it is fully equal to the Valencia as a keeper; in fact, it does not seem to have any tendency whatever to decay, and the fact that the ripe oranges which are on the tree at this time, and which should have been picked last April are still full of juice, is nothing short of wonderful.

We note with great interest Mr. Pelton's description in the Times Union of Long's Everbearing, wherein he recommends it for the home garden, and we fully agree with Mr. W. A. Taylor, chief of Bureau, that the Avon Park Everbearing Orange will be very valuable for the home garden; but we say to you, Mr. Florida Grower, in all earnestness, that this orange is so immensely valuable

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for large plantings that if it never has the official endorsement of any of the state or United States horticulturists, it will still be by far the greatest orange known to man, from the standpoint of a revenue producer. For an illustration: Imagine our orange growers being able, at any time during the year, when they find themselves short of money, to be able to gather and ship a car or two of oranges, and if our prophecy proves true, there will be enough of this variety planted in the next 20 years in this state, and probably California, to spread over every home garden in the universe.

We are frank to confess that our good opinion of the Florida Grower has been wonderfully increased as a result of the recommendation that they have given this orange, and makes us more thoroughly convinced that your paper is entitled to its slogan, "The Truth About Florida."

Lee & Edwards.

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The above letter to the Crop Physiologist gives a real description of the Avoneverbear orange, but the most valuable characteristics of this orange are being brought to light from day to day by the practical growers of the state who visit the tree. Mr. Frank Cody, of Crooked Lake, Florida, viewing the wonder tree, stated: "Well, this is what we have been looking for, for Lo, these many years."

Mr. L. C. Edwards, of the firm of Lee and Edwards, of Thonotosassa, Fla., who are among the largest growers in the state, said: "Imagine being able to pick a carload or two of oranges just at any time you are hard up." Mr. A. M. Tilden, a large citrus grower of Winter Haven, Florida, said: "This tree is a God-send to the people who are contemplating planting orange trees, as they can plant a variety that will not conflict with the present production to any extent, but will spread the bulk of their crop over a period in which there are no shipments at present. It is also a God-send to the people who are already in possession of bearing groves, as it will decrease the immense acreage being planted to old varieties, thereby checking their increase in production." Probably the most valuable statement made by anyone came from Mr. C. C. Commander, manager of the Florence Villa Citrus Growers' Association, who said: "If there never was a box of oranges shipped from this variety out of season, it is by far the most valuable orange tree that the world has ever known, as it will positively set a crop of fruit every year if taken care of. If it does not bloom sufficiently in the regular blooming time and does not set a crop of fruit, all the grower has to do is to take care of the tree and patiently wait for another bloom, and

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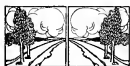
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another, and another, until his tree has all the fruit that it can carry."

Mr. Grower, when you take into consideration the fact that statistics show that all of the bearing orange trees in the State of Florida show an average production of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  boxes per tree per year, then why should you mistreat your pocketbook by purchasing an orange tree that may or may not bear regularly, regardless of all the attention you may give it? And if you are an orange grower, you know that these are the facts in the case.

Mr. Grower, imagine a heavy killing cold on the 28th day of February that would rob your trees of all their bloom. Have you any assurance with the present varieties that you will still be able to get a crop that year? With the Avoneverbear orange you take no chances whatever, as you have at least six chances during the year to set a full crop of fruit on the trees.

For one to visit this wonderful tree at Avon Park is to be thoroughly convinced that the introduction of this variety will be the cause of packing houses operating every month in the year.



For further information address,  
EVERBEAR NURSERIES COMPANY,  
Lakeland, Florida.

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